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Security Council

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Letter dated 7 July 2006 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to inform you that the Lebanese Government requests the Security Council to extend the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for an additional period of six months, i.e., to 31 January 2007, under Security Council resolutions 425 and 426, both of 19 March 1978. In this regard, the Lebanese Government emphasizes the following points:

1. Prevailing conditions in the region necessitate the continued presence of UNIFIL and its mission, inasmuch as Israel continues to violate resolution 425 (1978), which calls for respect for Lebanon's sovereignty and the restoration of international peace and security in the region. Indeed, Israel continues its violations of Lebanese sovereignty and its threats to Lebanon's security and peace, despite your repeated appeals to it to cease those violations, which the Security Council, in its resolution 1655 (2006), characterized as "continuing".

2. Given the current conditions in the region, the UNIFIL forces must be maintained without any change in their terms of reference or in their numbers. This is the conclusion reached by you in paragraph 40 of your report dated 18 January 2006 (S/2006/26), considering that a fundamental part of the UNIFIL mission, as defined in paragraph 3 of resolution 425 (1978), has yet to be realized, particularly with regard to restoring international peace and security in the region.

3. The Lebanese Government is continuing its efforts to strengthen its authority in the South and to revitalize and develop the region politically, economically and socially. It reaffirms its strong desire to maintain security in the region of the South, where the Lebanese armed forces continue to strengthen their presence with a view to preventing any security violations from occurring. They coordinate with UNIFIL and with your personal representative in Lebanon with a view to achieving that end.

4. The Lebanese Government greatly appreciates the contribution made by UNIFIL to operations to remove the thousands of mines left by Israel in Lebanese territory, which have caused dozens of casualties, prevent freedom of movement of the members of UNIFIL and bar extensive areas of the territory from any possibility of cultivation or economic or social use. In this connection, Lebanon demands that the Security Council require Israel to turn over the remaining maps of the locations of the mines left by it in Lebanese territory.

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5. The Lebanese Government appreciates the sacrifices made by the members of UNIFIL and thanks the States that have contributed forces, in particular the People's Republic of China, which has recently joined those States. The Lebanese Government reaffirms its commitment to the peace process in the Middle East, aimed at the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in the region based on the relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), the principle of land for peace and the Arab Peace Initiative, adopted in Beirut in March 2002.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Caroline **Ziadeh**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.